



West End Refugee Service

strength through support



Issue 59 October 2014

Welcome to the October edition of the WERS newsletter!

Our email address has changed!

info@wers.org.uk
for general enquiries

volunteers@wers.org.uk
for volunteering enquiries

Our old email addresses will still be checked for a limited period

- Provide free access to healthcare for all asylum seekers while they are in the UK;
- Grant asylum seekers permission to work if their case has not been resolved within six months or they have been refused, but temporarily cannot be returned through no fault of their own ;
- Improve decision making and ensure that all those in need of protection receive it.

WERS enthusiastically supports SHSH’s proposals!

Festive Week 2014: 15-19 December

WERS is again collecting gifts to give to the destitute asylum seekers who are being supported with £15 weekly payments from the hardship fund. Of the 120 destitute clients, there are 108 men and 12 women so men’s gifts will be particularly welcome. If gifts can be brought to WERS by Friday 5 December, that would be great! We are collecting the same things as last year which are:

WERS AGM

Our AGM earlier this month was a very good evening with 64 people in attendance. Following the business meeting, Mike Kaye from Still Human Still Here gave an excellent talk and answered lots of questions from the floor.

The Still Human Still Here coalition believes that the current asylum policy is inhumane and ineffective and is urging the Government to:

- Provide asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute with sufficient support so that they can meet their essential living needs until they are returned to their country of origin or are given permission to stay in the UK;

- Toiletries (no razors)**
- Bars of chocolate (no nuts)**
- Woolly hats**
- Scarves**
- Gloves**
- Socks**



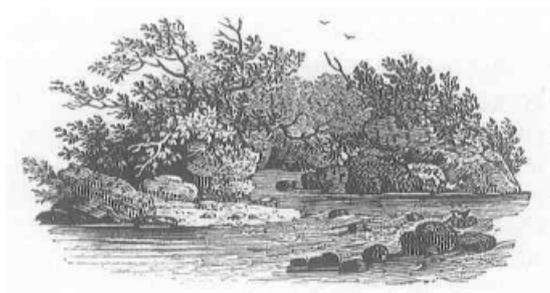
Relais de la memoire Juniors Conference at Dame Allan's School

Musa Hassan Ali, support worker at WERS, was invited once again to the Relais conference where he spoke about the Rwandan genocide.

115 European students and staff attended the two day conference on 17/18 October. The conference was opened by the Lord Mayor, Cllr George Pattinson, who reminded participants of the meaning of their organisation: Memory Builds the Future.

Relais is a national organisation founded to keep alive the memories of the Second World War and to promote reconciliation and understanding in Europe and beyond. Ali joined an impressive line-up of guest speakers who included Richard Moore, the founder of the charity Children in Crossfire, holocaust survivor Ruth Barnett and the EU co-ordinator of Amnesty International Richard Kotter, who all contributed to the conference's challenging theme of 'victims and perpetrators of torture.'

Concert raises £410 for hardship fund



The Bewick orchestra continued their wonderful support of our work by donating the proceeds of another of their concerts to WERS. The concert held at Ponteland United Reformed Church on Saturday 18 October raised a fantastic £410. The programme of Beethoven, Elgar, Telemann, Arnold and Mendelssohn was very much enjoyed by everyone in the audience. A big thank-you to Heather Ferris for organising the evening!



Doughnut day for WERS!



Students from Moorside Community School held a doughnut day to raise money to purchase toiletries for WERS clients. They visited us to deliver the toiletries and to learn more about our services here. It was lovely to see the students and to answer their questions about many of the issues that asylum seekers and refugees face.

Moorside Community School became a School of Sanctuary in June and the students are doing a wonderful range of activities to celebrate the presence of refugees and asylum seekers in Newcastle. A big thank you to the school and the students for their efforts!

Lindsay Cross

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